



NGC News

New Submission Center Opens in China

Guangzhou National Standard Numismatic Collection Grading Co., Ltd will assist collectors and dealers to prepare submissions and to ship and insure coins to NGC, NCS and PMG for certification.

[Read this article...](#)

Coins and Currency Exhibition Opens at the Smithsonian

The recently renovated National Museum of American History has opened a new coin and currency exhibition, "Stories on Money," the only Smithsonian display dedicated to numismatics. Read on for more details.

[Read this article...](#)

Hobby Leaders Discuss Anti-Counterfeiting Actions

Leaders from five of the most influential organizations in numismatics, the ANA, the Industry Council for Tangible Assets (ICTA), NGC, PCGS and the PNG, are launching a campaign against counterfeit numismatic items sold and imported from China and elsewhere.

[Read this article...](#)

Lincoln Label Now Available In Tier Submissions

NGC now offers the Lincoln Label for 2009 Bicentennial Lincoln Coins. Read on for coin eligibility, submission guidelines and more!

Note: this label is no longer available.

[Read this article...](#)

From the Grading Room: 1948 Obverse Die Trial for the Franklin Half Dollar

An unusual and likely unique Franklin Half Dollar die trial illustrates the careful consideration underlying the placement and appearance of the designer's initials.

[Read this article...](#)

NumisMedia Market Report: 1804 Dollar Electrifies Auction *By NumisMedia*

The recent auction sale of the 1804 Dollar is a strong indication that truly rare coins are still quite marketable. Read on to learn why this is a positive phase for astute collectors.

[Read this article...](#)

'S' Mint Memories, Part Three

This month, David W. Lange wraps up his recollection of the San Francisco Mint, focusing on its mint structure today, and its fond role in his numismatic adventures.

[Read this article...](#)

From the NGC Archives: 1885-S Coronet Half Eagle

This special five-dollar piece, designed in 1838, features the classical bust of Liberty. Seldom found in gem condition, it is a truly superb



- Submit directly to NGC
- Online submission forms and order tracking
- Memberships from \$39/yr

[Join Today >](#)

specimen. *Read on for more details.*

[Read this article...](#)

NGC Coming to a Show Near You

NGC will be in attendance at several shows in the coming months.

Read on for dates and locations.

[Read this article...](#)

Visit our affiliated websites:



Official Grading Service of



800-NGC-COIN | www.NGCcoin.com | © 2014

Numismatic Guaranty Corporation | P.O. Box 4738 | Sarasota, FL 34230

New Submission Center Opens in China

Posted on 6/22/2009

Guangzhou National Standard Numismatic Collection Grading Co., Ltd will assist collectors and dealers to prepare submissions and to ship and insure coins to NGC, NCS and PMG for certification.

In Guangzhou, China, a new company has been established to operate a submission center for Certified Collectibles Group companies, NGC, NCS and PMG. Guangzhou National Standard Numismatic Collection Grading Co., Ltd opened formally in June 2009 and is now accepting submissions. The new organization is allied with the Guangdong Province Coin Collection Association, the most active and widely-known numismatic association in China.

A submission center serves dual roles. First, they assist both collectors and dealers with the submission process, handling international transport and insurance to Certified Collectibles Group (CCG) headquarters in Sarasota, Florida. Second, in the countries that they operate, they provide information about certification services provided by CCG.

“Removing barriers and making it easy to send collectibles to us for certification from anywhere in the world is a central component of our growth internationally. Already, considerable interest is being shown for certified coins and currency in China and we are very fortunate to have formed this partnership with an exceptional group of professionals in Guangzhou,” comments Steve Eichenbaum, CEO of Certified Collectibles Group.

In China, easy access to professional certification services will help the market expand and develop. Already among coin collectors, the Chinese market has emerged as an important segment, due in part to the considerable popularity of the Chinese Panda bullion program and the innovative 22-coin Beijing Olympics commemorative program. The accurate and consistent application of grading

standards makes it easy for buyer and seller to agree on an item's condition allowing for smooth transactions across wide geographic distances and using online exchanges. Collectors of Chinese coinage have shown a preference for NGC-certified coins due to NGC's leadership position in the marketplace worldwide and because of NGC's guarantee of authenticity. NGC provides a money-back guarantee should a coin that they have certified be determined to be not genuine, removing significant risks for collectors and increasing buyer confidence.

An opening celebration was held to announce the launch to the media and numismatic professionals on June 1, 2009. More than a hundred Chinese and foreign experts, coin dealers and invited guests were present. Mr. Zhen Wei Gang, president of the Guangdong Province Coin Collection Association, concluded the opening presentation with his address in which he stated: "With China's rapid economic and cultural development, the Chinese coin industry has also expanded rapidly. The outlook is very positive; trading continues to become more diverse and more active. Certification will help to foster the continued development of the Chinese coin market. This new venture is a major step to promote and facilitate stability for the Chinese coin market and to assure sustainable development."

More information about Guangzhou National Standard Numismatic Collection Grading Co., Ltd. can be found on their Web site, www.gbngc.com.



A crowd gathers at the entrance of the grand opening of the numismatic submission center in Guangzhou.



Speakers at the grand opening presentation. From left to right, Mr. B.H Lim, Mr. Dai Zhiqiang, counselor of People's Bank of China and the former curator of China Numismatic Museum, Mr. Martin Weiss, Mr. . Xu Jinyuan, chairman of China Gold Association, Mr. Zhen Wei Gang, and Ms. Xu Jingyou, president of Guangdong Province Gold Association.



Numismatic experts and members of the media are seated for a presentation to formally announce the grand opening of NGC's Submission Center in China.



Members and invited guests of Guangzhou National Standard Numismatic Collection Grading Company stand before a banner at a celebration banquet following the opening presentation. Mr. Zhen, organization chairman, is at left.

Articles List

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All >](#)



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

Coins and Currency Exhibition Opens at the Smithsonian

Posted on 6/11/2009

The recently renovated National Museum of American History has opened a new coin and currency exhibition, "Stories on Money," the only Smithsonian display dedicated to numismatics. Read on for more details.

A new exhibition of coins and currency, "Stories on Money," has opened at the recently renovated National Museum of American History. The first floor gallery is currently the only display dedicated fully to numismatics at the Smithsonian. "Stories on Money" illustrates the changing themes and designs of circulating money during critical moments in American history.

The exhibition case that's likely to draw the most attention from US coin enthusiasts is titled, "America's Legendary Coins." Included among the 18 coins it highlights are all three types of the 1804 dollar, a 1933 \$20 gold piece, both extant gold 1877 Half Unions (\$50), and two versions of the 1907 Ultra High Relief \$20. At the center of the display is the unique gold 1849 \$20, described in the exhibit simply as follows: "Many consider this the most historically significant U.S. coin because it is the very first twenty-dollar gold coin...ever made." It is widely considered to be the single most valuable coin in existence.

During the welcome presentation, Mark Salzberg, Chairman of NGC and NCS, described his first visit to the Smithsonian 27 years ago: "The display I saw from the National collection was inspiring enough to color my thinking about coins and collections throughout my entire career as a numismatist. It was unforgettable." Building from that initial exposure, Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC) and Numismatic Conservation Services (NCS) are now presenting sponsors of "Stories on Money." This is the third exhibition that NGC and NCS have sponsored in addition to providing conservation and storage consultancy aimed at improving the [long-term preservation of the collection](#).

"'Stories on Money' is the return of coins to the museum," commented Brent Glass, Director of the National Museum of American History, during his welcome address at the opening reception in which he predicted strong viewership for the exhibition. Already, over 2.5 million visitors have come to the Museum since it re-opened in November 2008, Glass noted.



Mark Salzberg and Adam Crum cut a red ribbon to officially open "Stories on Money." From left to right, Brent Glass, Adam Crum, Richard Kurin, Mark Salzberg, Edmund Moy, Jeff Garrett, and Elizabeth Little.

The exhibition draws from the Museum's National Numismatic Collection, which consists of more than 1.5 million objects, including coins, medals and paper currency and preserves the role of money in economic history. The exhibition also uses objects and interactive media to immerse visitors in these stories on money. Enlarged image of every item on display in "Stories on Money" can be examined using a touch-screen monitor placed along-side each exhibit case.

The National Museum of American History is located on the National Mall, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. To learn more about the museum or to plan your visit, go to americanhistory.si.edu. For Smithsonian information, the public may call (202) 633-1000, (202) 633-5285 (TTY).

Related articles: [Money Talks at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of

NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



View All >



Careers Legal Privacy Policy Security Center Sitemap Terms Affiliates Contact

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States

Hobby Leaders Discuss Anti-Counterfeiting Actions

Posted on 6/2/2009

Leaders from five of the most influential organizations in numismatics, the ANA, the Industry Council for Tangible Assets (ICTA), NGC, PCGS and the PNG, are launching a campaign against counterfeit numismatic items sold and imported from China and elsewhere.

(Long Beach, California) – Leaders of five of the hobby and profession's most influential organizations are launching a multi-pronged consumer awareness and protection campaign against counterfeit numismatic items sold and imported from China and elsewhere. The organizations in alphabetical order are the American Numismatic Association (ANA), the Industry Council for Tangible Assets (ICTA), Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC), Professional Coin Grading Service (PCGS) and the Professional Numismatists Guild (PNG).

Representatives of the five groups participated in a preliminary teleconference call on May 7, 2009, and then met in Long Beach, California on May 27 to discuss a coordinated plan of action. The groups recognize that counterfeiting can't be completely stopped, but that efforts can be made to reduce the easy availability of fakes and to educate coin buyers about common sense ways to avoid unwittingly purchasing them.

They agreed to pursue a three-part strategy as a group and/or as individual organizations: initiate consumer education and protection programs including online resources to reach the casual coin-buying public who are not part of the mainstream numismatic community; aggressively attempt to compel online auction sites to be more responsive to complaints about fraudulent listings of fake certification services' holders and replica coins that are in violation of The Hobby Protection Act; and utilize ICTA's extensive experience in Washington, DC to explore possible criminal actions by federal law enforcement agencies against importers and sellers of illegal numismatic items.

First enacted in 1973 and amended in 1988, The Hobby Protection Act requires manufacturers and importers of imitation numismatic items to mark them plainly and permanently with the word, "COPY."

"There are numerous reports of replica coins being shipped from China without the word, 'COPY,' on them despite clearly showing that word on photos of those items when they were offered for sale," said ICTA Chairman Fred Weinberg. "It's the Wild West coming out of the Far East."

PNG President Gary Adkins suggested the groups may want to file formal complaints with the Chinese government.

Certified Collectibles Group/NGC Vice President Scott Schechter and PCGS President Don Willis said both authentication services have purchased counterfeit coins and dies for study and to remove them from the market. Both companies have been working to get fraudulent auction listings removed, but both also have seen an increase in the number of counterfeit coins being submitted to them.

NGC has started sending notices with returned counterfeits reminding submitters it is illegal to sell fakes or replicas that do not have the word "copy," and PCGS will send similar notification to submitters.

Both grading services urge coin buyers to use common sense by not making purchases at flea markets and pawn shops, but instead to only purchase coins from major, reputable auction firms and from NGC or PCGS authorized dealers because both services guarantee what's in their holders.

Willis said on one recent day there were more than 7,300 coins listed on an online auction site that were identified as "copy" or "replica." He added: "It's kind of like the little Dutch boy trying to plug leaks. We need to stop the imports."

PNG Immediate Past President Jeff Garrett expressed the group's concern about the quality of some fakes entering the market: "Until recently, the quality of the counterfeits seen was quite sub-standard. Some of the fakes now are very good, and the collecting public should be very careful when considering uncertified material, regardless of the source. It is more important than ever before to purchase coins from reputable dealers who guarantee their merchandise. PNG dealers offer lifetime guarantees of authenticity."

ANA President Barry Stuppler said: "To help the public protect themselves, the ANA will use its publications, web site and educational seminars to make our membership and the general public aware of counterfeit numismatic items and

certified holders.”

Participants in the May 7 teleconference were Stuppler; ICTA Chairman Weinberg, Executive Director Eloise Ullman and Industry Affairs Director Diane Piret; Certified Collectibles Group (NGC) Chief Executive Officer Steve Eichenbaum; Collectors Universe President and PCGS Co-Founder David Hall; PNG Executive Director Robert Brueggeman, Legal Counsel Armen Vartian and Executive Assistant Tina Shireman. The meeting was moderated by PNG affiliate member and former ANA Governor Donn Pearlman.

Participants in the May 27 meeting in Long Beach were Adkins, Brueggeman, Garrett, Pearlman, Piret, Schechter, Stuppler, Vartian, Weinberg, Willis and an invited guest, ICTA consultant and former Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Special Agent Raymond Gregson, Jr.

‘While real progress is being made, we hope that our cooperative efforts will encourage other dealers and collectors to address counterfeits with greater diligence. For example, a great and easy step is to notify grading services when coins in counterfeit holders appear in the marketplace so that appropriate action can be taken," said Schechter.

Representatives of the five organizations will meet again at the American Numismatic Association World’s Fair of Money® convention in Los Angeles in August.

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All](#) >





[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

 United States 

Lincoln Label Now Available In Tier Submissions

Posted on 6/1/2009

*NGC now offers the Lincoln Label for 2009 Bicentennial Lincoln Coins. Read on for coin eligibility, submission guidelines and more! **Note: this label is no longer available.***

The Lincoln Label is now available for 2009 Bicentennial Lincoln Coins submitted using NGC grading tiers. Eligible coin types include the 2009 Lincoln Commemorative Dollar in mint state and proof and the 2009 Bicentennial Lincoln Cents in mint state (both circulation and mint set or SMS issues) and proof issues. Only these coins are eligible.

Although there are no additional service fees, strict submission guidelines must be followed to receive this label. In order to minimize processing delays, label requests made on improperly completed submissions will be encapsulated with standard NGC labels.



[click image to enlarge](#)

Tier Submission Instructions for Lincoln Label

1. Submitters sending five or more coins for encapsulation with the Lincoln Label can use the Modern Tier. When submitting fewer than five coins, Early Bird Tier must be used.
2. The words LINCOLN LABEL must be written prominently on the submission form. If no written request appears on the submission form, standard NGC labels will be used.

3. Most importantly, when requesting the Lincoln Label, coins to be encapsulated with this label cannot be combined with coins requiring other labels or ineligible coins. They must be isolated on their own submission form. Mixed label requests on a single submission form will automatically receive standard NGC labels.

Coins already certified with the standard NGC label that are eligible for the Lincoln Label can be submitted to NGC using the Reholder service. Coins should be listed on a Reholder invoice as normal with the words LINCOLN LABEL written prominently on the form. The standard Reholder charge of \$5 per coin applies.

The Lincoln Label is also available using NGC bulk submission when minimum submission requirements are met.

Because of the strict submission requirements for this request, please contact NGC Customer Service with any questions about preparing a submission at service@NGCcoin.com or by phone at 1-800-NGC-COIN (642-2646).

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All](#) >



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States

From the Grading Room: 1948 Obverse Die Trial for the Franklin Half Dollar

Posted on 6/22/2009

An unusual and likely unique Franklin Half Dollar die trial illustrates the careful consideration underlying the placement and appearance of the designer's initials.

Among the interesting “stuff” in Appendix A of the Judd book (United States Pattern Coins, 10th Edition, Whitman Publishing, LLC) is number J-A1948-2. This is a uniface, obverse die trial for the Franklin Half Dollar dated 1948. Judd lists it as white metal, but it appears to be simply lead. The reverse of this trial impression is plain, save for the target-like concentric circles imparted by the engine lathe and a single numeral 2 punched into it.



[click image to enlarge](#)



The truncation of Franklin's bust shows two sets of the designer's initials.

What makes this trial so interesting, however, is that it bears two sets of designer's initials at the truncation of the bust. It's a well known story how John Ray Sinnock's initials “JS” on the 1946 Roosevelt Dime were interpreted by some alarmists as a reference to the dreaded Josef Stalin. The U. S. Mint wasn't taking any chances with its new half dollar, and all three initials “JRS” were included. In this trial piece, the letters appear in both the familiar position with the letters nearly upright and also further to the right in italic form.

As issued, the Franklin half utilized italic initials, but these were placed to the left.

This die trial is believed to be unique and serves as the plate coin in the Judd reference. It was acquired by its present owner from a Herbert Melnick auction of November 19-20, 1982, listed as Lot 49. It was authenticated at the time by the

late Charles R. Hoskins but, appearing at a slow period in the coin market, drew little attention at the time. Though it carries no other provenance, it was most likely a souvenir retained by Gilroy Roberts, Chief Engraver of the U. S. Mint 1948-65, who completed the models of the Franklin coin after designer Sinnock died in 1947. It is graded MS-60 by NGC.

From the Grading Room is an occasional feature on this site in which we highlight some of the unusual, interesting, and special coins submitted to NGC for certification. You can also learn more about the Franklin Half Dollar in the [NGC Coin Encyclopedia](#).



click image to enlarge

Articles List

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



View All >



NumisMedia Market Report: 1804 Dollar Electrifies Auction

Posted by NumisMedia on 6/16/2009

The recent auction sale of the 1804 Dollar is a strong indication that truly rare coins are still quite marketable. Read on to learn why this is a positive phase for astute collectors.

While the overall market continues to show softness compared to a year ago, the sale of the 1804 Dollar by Heritage Galleries at the Central States Convention is a strong indication that truly rare coins are still quite marketable. It is true that buyers are more selective in today's market; however, this is a positive phase for astute collectors. Buying more coins for less money is always a good practice, especially when you can buy coins with a pedigree like the 1804 Adams-Carter Class III in AU 58. Now we can add the name of John Albanese to the lineage as the latest owner of this fabulous coin. The selling price was \$2.3 million.

The 1804 was not the only high profile coin that changed hands at Central States. Total prices realized were over \$45 million. Some of the other highlights include an 1870 S Seated Dollar in XF 40 that realized \$503,125; a 1794 Bust Dollar in MS 61 sold for the same \$503,125; and an 1876 CC Twenty Cent in MS 66 traded at \$460,000. It is believed that there are less than 20 coins surviving today of this rarity and this is quite obviously one of the finest known. A few more major highlights follow.

Denomination	Grade	Price Realized
1918/7 D Buffalo Nickel	PCGS MS 65	\$253,000
1796 Bust Dime	NGC MS 67	\$253,000
1919 D Walking Liberty Half	PCGS MS 66	\$253,000

1794 Flowing Hair Dollar	NGC AU 55	\$345,00
1795 Flowing Hair Dollar	NGC Ms 65	\$276,00

For a complete list of prices realized, please contact Heritage Galleries in Dallas.

In any major auction, rarities will always attract a great deal of attention. For example, an 1879 CC Morgan Dollar in MS 65 will catch the interest of hundreds of Morgan Dollar collectors. If it is the only one in the sale it could attract many competitive bids. However, if there are several coins in the same grade, the prices realized can become diluted. The coin with the best eye appeal will bring the highest price and the other coins could suffer from discounting, sometimes substantially reduced prices realized. Once the best quality coin sells, 25% of the potential buyers could drop out of the bidding for the slightly lesser quality coins. In the Central States Auction, several coins sold and brought prices from \$21,850 all the way down to \$16,100. A year ago when the market was hot, the MS 65 had an FMV of \$29,380. Today, it is searching for a lower FMV.

Carson City \$20 Gold continues to be an area that is highly sought after. Collectors from all over the world have a strong affinity for coins from the "Old Frontier". The history behind these coins fascinates even those who cannot afford the luxury of owning these rare issues. The FMV for most of these dates has increased over the last several months. Grades from VF to MS 63 will bring many buyers into the competition when these coins are offered at major auctions. Like any other scarce coin, eye appeal will make the difference in the selling price of an average coin for the grade opposed to one that is middle to upper end of the grade spectrum. Many of the scarcest Carson City Double Eagles are up by over 20% since early 2008. The 1871 CC in MS 62 had an FMV of \$110,500 and today it is \$149,500. Other Mint State issues are higher in the same manner. While the market for these coins is very strong today, there are still some bargains available because the effects of the economy have reduced the number of potential buyers. However, the number of Mint State coins certified in the highest grades is very limited.

Activity in modern bullion coins seems to be spearheading much of today's market. Bullion related items trading on the teletype between dealers looks to be about 75% of the action over the last few weeks. In addition, competitive buying and selling has forced the premiums to fall on Silver and Gold, which is very good for the ultimate buyers (investors). At the Long Beach Coin Expo, numerous dealers were trying to buy all the Modern Gold they could find at reasonable levels. Modern \$5 Gold Commemoratives now have a minimum FMV of \$288 in MS 69 or PR 69. As the show progressed, bullion continued to rise and many

analysts feel Gold is poised to crack through the \$1,000 barrier once again. As the summer activity unfolds the rise in metals will continue to have a major influence on the rare coin market.

As far as Modern issue coins dated after 1940, Lincoln Cents, Jefferson Nickels, Roosevelt Dimes, Washington Quarters, Kennedy Halves and all the Dollars, there is so much inventory in the market that buyers can be selective to the point that they can wait for the most attractive coin for the grade at today’s FMV. Even the Modern Commemorative Half Dollars and Dollars are suffering over the last few weeks. Mint State and Proof 70 coins have fallen considerably because there certainly are not as many buyers for these coins as there was a year ago. Most of these collectors already have many of the coins they need for their sets and the industry is not gaining new collectors at the same pace as we were the previous eight years. Modern issues certainly require new entrants into the collector community. The only caveat for these modern issues is that the highest grades with very low populations will still command very strong prices from Registry collectors.

This article is a guest article written by:



The thoughts and opinions in the piece are those of their author and are not necessarily the thoughts of the Certified Collectibles Group.

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All](#) >





[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

 United States 

'S' Mint Memories, Part Three

Posted on 6/16/2009

This month, David W. Lange wraps up his recollection of the San Francisco Mint, focusing on its mint structure today, and its fond role in his numismatic adventures.

In the two previous installments of this memoir, I described my love affair with San Francisco Mint coins and my experiences with the Old San Francisco Mint and Museum. This month I'd like to wrap up this series with some recollections of the current mint structure and its place in my numismatic adventures.

The mint building which opened in 1937 looks more like a prison than a coining facility. Its severe appearance is reinforced by its placement atop a hill overlooking the main thoroughfare in San Francisco. The heavy steel gates which identify its entrance continue this theme of maximum security, though two teenage boys somehow managed to work their ways through a lower window within a year of the mint's completion! Since that time, however, there have been no unauthorized entries, and the current San Francisco Mint is not open to tours.



I've been fortunate to be an invited guest on a number of occasions, and these have always been memorable experiences. A friend of mine, now retired, was the mint's senior die setter and was also quite active in local coin clubs. This afforded me the opportunity to attend two first-strike ceremonies at the mint during the 1980s. I was present in 1985 when the first examples were coined of the Statue of Liberty Centennial proof dollars and half dollars, and I also witnessed the first striking of the proof silver American eagle coins the following year. In each instance I and the other persons present received a nice souvenir portfolio which included official photographs of the coins, a commemorative ribbon, press releases and other promotional materials which today I still have as cherished mementos. Sadly, I was not among those permitted to strike the first few pieces,

nor was I allowed to obtain any coins that day. VIP status notwithstanding, I had to place my mail order like everyone else.

As I mentioned above, there were and still are no public tours of the current San Francisco Mint. These two instances in which I was permitted to visit the mint were certainly not tours, as all of us were escorted directly to the location of the ceremonial coining and were not permitted to see other areas of the building. As an observant numismatist I was able to pick up on a lot of details with just that limited exposure, but I believe my non-numismatic companions were largely oblivious to some of the more interesting features. A much more satisfying experience was had in 1987, on the occasion of my friend's retirement after 20+ years of service with the San Francisco Mint.

Whether this was the custom with other retiring employees or was done simply because of my friend's numismatic interests outside of work, he was permitted to personally conduct tours of the facility for very limited groups. I was among the lucky few invited to participate, and I joined him along with my father and two other persons for an extremely hands-on, behind-the-scenes inspection of the mint.

Among the more interesting things I witnessed was the destruction of the remaining proof 1982-S Washington half dollars. The first of the modern-era USA commemoratives, these coins were welcomed by the hobby when they debuted, but their continued sales year after year soon made them a drug on the market. It was not until 1986 that the US Mint finally closed this program, and the remaining pieces were condemned to the melting pot. This was done onsite at the SF Mint, but first it had to overcome the problem of removing them from their hard plastic capsules. This the employees did in a most ingenious manner: The encapsulated coins were run through an upsetting mill (the machine which raises a rim on unstruck planchets) to shatter the plastic and free the coins. In the mint's basement I was treated to the sight of enormous tote bins full of either plastic shards or mounds of scratched and scraped proof coins!

Also on that special tour I was permitted to handle and inspect the dies for the Mint's newest collector entry — the Constitution Bicentennial silver dollar. Even in die form this was and is among the ugliest of United States coins, and I couldn't conceal my disappointment. More interesting to me was the fact that the SF Mint's die locker was a small compartment with a wooden, swinging Dutch door. It looked just like the coach's equipment locker when I was in high school!

In an unprecedented move, the doors of the San Francisco Mint were finally opened to public tours for a brief time in 1992 to honor the bicentennial of the US

Mint. This quickly became the hottest ticket in town, as only limited numbers of persons would be admitted. It seemed that everyone, whether or not they were collectors, wanted to see how coins were made. Though I would be just another person among a crowd of people taking the tour, I still jumped at the chance. The mint staffers were surprisingly generous in how much was shown to the public and in how much they interacted with visitors in this pre-9/11 era. Perhaps the thing I remember most about this tour was my surprise at the tedious handwork necessary to prepare the proof dies. I watched an employee meticulously cutting away clear tape around the die cavities to expose the frosted relief elements of the design, a process necessary to provide the contrast between brilliant fields and frosted devices. I couldn't believe that as late as 1992 this process wasn't entirely automated.

David W. Lange's column, "USA Coin Album" appears monthly in The Numismatist, the official publication of the [American Numismatic Association](#).

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



[View All](#) >

NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

From the NGC Archives: 1885-S Coronet Half Eagle

Posted on 6/16/2009

This special five-dollar piece, designed in 1838, features the classical bust of Liberty. Seldom found in gem condition, it is a truly superb specimen. Read on for more details.

The classical bust of Liberty which graces this five-dollar piece was designed by Christian Gobrecht in 1838 and first applied to this denomination the following year. In 1866, the motto IN GOD WE TRUST was added to the reverse, and it remained through the end of the series in 1908.



[Click to enlarge](#)

The San Francisco Mint produced a relatively large number of five-dollar pieces in 1885. While not a rare date overall, the 1885-S half eagle is seldom found in gem condition. There were evidently no collectors of this series by date and mint at that time, and gems have survived by mere chance. This specimen possesses an absolutely complete strike that affords it a wealth of fine detail. Its luster is superb, the fields being satiny at the centers and frostier toward the borders. The surfaces of this coin are pleasingly clean.



[Click to enlarge](#)

Are you interested in Half Eagles? Click [here](#) to visit the NGC Coin Encyclopedia and read more.

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of

NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All](#) >



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

NGC Coming to a Show Near You

Posted on 6/16/2009

NGC will be in attendance at several shows in the coming months. Read on for dates and locations.

June 25–27

[MidAmerica Coin Expo](#)

Renaissance Hotel & Convention Center
Schaumburg, IL

July 9–11

[FUN Show](#)

Palm Beach County Convention Center
West Palm Beach, FL

August 4–9

PNG Day & [ANA World's Fair of Money®*](#)

Los Angeles Convention Center
Los Angeles, CA

September 3–5

[12th International Collector Fair](#)

PVA Letnany Exhibition Center
Prague, Czech Republic

September 10–12

[Long Beach Coin & Collectibles Expo *](#)

Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, CA

September 23–26

[Whitman Philadelphia Coin & Collectibles Convention*](#)

Philadelphia Convention Center
Philadelphia, PA

*** On-site grading available**

This notation indicates that NGC is offering on-site grading services. At these events, on-site grading services may not be offered for the entire duration of the show dates listed. Please contact NGC Customer Service at 1-800-NGC-COIN for information regarding the specific dates and times these services are offered.

All coins certified or reholdered on-site by NGC at shows receive the [Scratch-Resistant EdgeView® Holder](#).

Please be aware that while we strive to provide the most accurate information, the scheduled dates and the attendance of NGC at the shows listed above are subject to change

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All](#) >



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States